

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/026,970

Examiner

John B Strege

Applicant(s)

HAMANO ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the application filed 12/27/01.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-7.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 27 December 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 3/21/02
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-7 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: None of the prior art disclose an inspection method for inspecting a geometric pattern of an information recording section consisting of a ferromagnetic thin-film layer formed on a master disk from which initial information is copied to a magnetic recording medium comprising: aligning the image of the information recording section with the non-defective product information with respect to the image of alignment marks formed on a circumference concentric with the recording section, and comparing the image of the information recording section with non-defective product information to inspect the information recording section. Ichikawa et al. USPN 4,789,238 discloses a method of inspecting a magnetic disk surface, however the procedure is different from the limitations claimed in the instant application and fails to disclose alignment marks being formed on the disk, a reference image (or non-defective product information) to compare with the captured image, or aligning the reference image with the captured image to detect defects. Kaupp USPN 6,603,540 discloses a method for examining rotationally symmetrical objects by using alignment marks to monitor a disk (such as a CD shown in figure 1) for repeating defects. However Kaupp does not disclose providing non-defective product and comparing it with the captured images of a disk. Also Kaupp pertain to optical disks and therefore does not explicitly disclose that it can be used with magnetic disks. Further there is no motivation to combine Kaupp and Ichikawa as their methods are not related. Basler et al. discloses a process and device

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for the optical testing of a surface such as the top of a CD (11 in figure 2) in which an actual image is compared with a desired image of the CD label. Basler does not disclose alignment marks or inspecting a magnetic disk, and furthermore there is no motivation to combine Basler with Ichikawa or Kaupp. Thus for these reasons claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 2-6 are dependent on claim 1 and thus are allowable for the same reasons. Claim 7 is similar to claim 1 except it is for inspecting a mask pattern used in forming an information recording section consisting of a ferromagnetic thin-film layer on a master disk from which initial information is copied to a magnetic recording medium. Thus for the same reasons given for claim 1, claim 7 is allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. USPN 5,073,951 discloses a method of inspection for the adhesive on a floppy disk.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John B Strege whose telephone number is (703) 305-

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8679. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday between the hours of 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bhavesh Mehta can be reached on (703) 308-5246. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JS



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